The World

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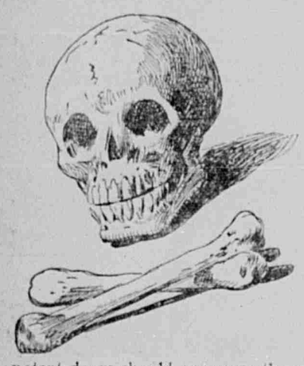
"DEATH DUTIES."



The following item appeared in yesterday's news:

"LINCOLN, Neb., May 17.—Mrs. A. F. Pearson, of Altoona, Kan., died on a Missouri Pacific train which reached here to-day. The Coroner, after an examination, said he believed death had been caused by an overdose of headache tablets which contained poison."

It was to prevent such unfortunate "accidents" as this that the Stevens-Wainwright bill was introduced into the Assembly and Senate of our own State during its late session. This bill provided that any patent medicine containing poisons or potent drugs should announce the presence and the quantity of such poisons or drugs on its label, so that people could know exactly what poisons they were imbibing and so that fatalities like the above could be classed as suicides instead of as homicides.

The bill was killed in committee probably because our legislators had heard that the British Government collected its death duties and saw no reason why certain of our patent medicines should not collect theirs.

NO MORE STILT ROADS!

Bridge Commissioner Stevenson appears to have been won over to the plan of an elevated bridge terminal loop, the active reagitation of which has begun under the direction of ex-Borough President Littleton. The Bridge Commissioner advocates a "temporary" elevated connection for quick relief, to be torn down when the subway connection is completed.

This is certainly the easiest solution of the problem. It is the cheapest for the operating companies concerned. The Brooklyn Rapid Transit would then not be required to replace a single one of its antiquated cars or prop up its structure for the passage of cars built to conform to subway standards. The Interborough is prepared at a moment's notice to double-deck its Third avenue line from the City Hall to Delancey street.

But the devastation of Delancey street or any other street by a new elevated structure is not to be thought of. The public policy is unalterably opposed to it. It is true, as the Commissioner says, that Manhattan owes it to Brooklyn to give the people of that borough all the relief possible. But not at this cost.

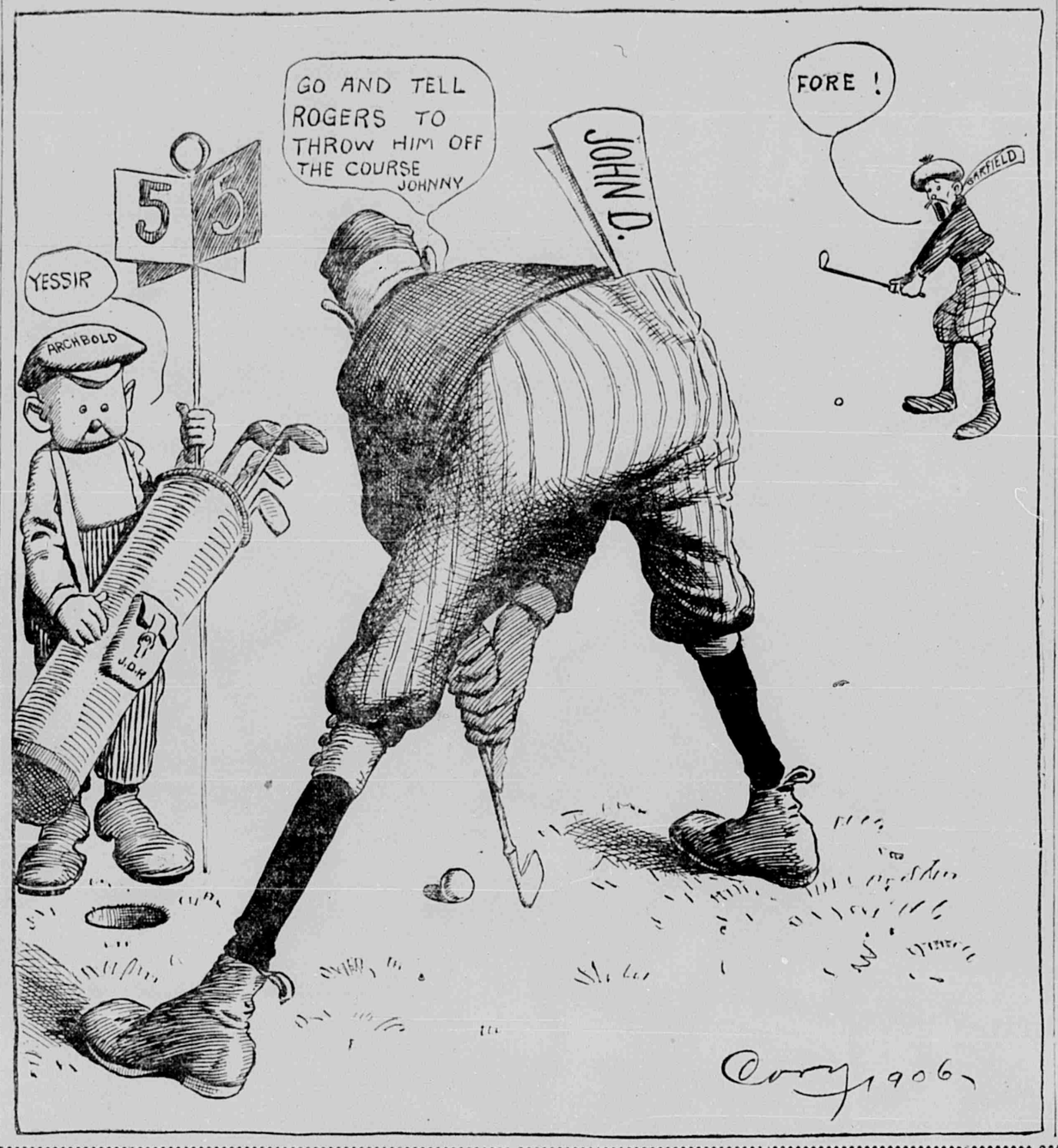
Why not discharge the obligation by putting some of the time and energy wasted on "temporary" schemes to the better use of planning for the permanent subway loop?

Are not the summer burglars beginning a little early? Though the warm weather has come, everybody is not yet out of town, and they are liable to interruption while at work.

The numerous cases of housebreaking during the week necessarily arouse apprehension. Is the city to look forward to another carnival of summer burglary? It is at this time that the young crook tries his prentice hand on houses boarded up for the season. His depredations, Commissioner McAdoo said, are a natural concomitant of the heated term. That being the case, it would seem to be the duty of the police to prepare a specially warm welcome for him.

"Where Angels Fear to Tread."

By J. Campbell Cory.



NEW YORK THRO' FUNNY GLASSES

By Irvin S. Cobb.

THIS thing of living on Lobster Island isn't always what it's cracked up to be. True, if caught early and acclimated promptly the subject may be rendered more or less immune to the bite of the foolish bug, but if you delay too long the aforesaid insect is mighty apt to nail a victim. A great many persons who suffer from bad cases of cockroach in the cupola would have been all right if brought here young and cured up before it got to be a confirmed habit. It may be true that you can't teach an old dog new tricks, but this town is full of old ones trying to learn, and making sublimated sub-carboniferous idiots of themselves doing it.

Take, for an example, that well-known fellow-townsman, Senator Clark. As long as he was known as the only man in Montana who paid the highest market price for a Senatorship and then couldn't get the goods delivered, he did very well. The trouble with him was he got fascinated by the idea of owning a desirable building site on a street where the old men think in soums of seven figures and the young men in words of one syllable. In Butte he would have erected a large square-faced red brick containing the only shower-bath attachment in town and having a front-yard full of catalpa trees and cast-iron dogs.

And when Elbert Hubbard came to town to lecture under the auspices of the Lyceum Bureau of the Y. M. C. A. and the reception committee took him around in a hack cut decollete they would have pointed out to him Senator Clark's neat residence, along with the Carnegie Library, the fair

grounds fence and other places of interest. This all would have been well.

But no. Just as soon as he filed the deeds for that corner lot he was seized with a violent attack of that disease so common among the newly-landed—"going-'em-one-betteritis." With him the malady took the form of erecting in our midst an intoxicated court-house with a roof suffering from a cowlick in front and Marcel waves behind, a frenzied smokestack on top and marble imitations of his own whiskers over the portico.

Once there was a chap who started out by wearing freckles that looked like cameos and chewing hillside tobacco and teaching school and clerking in a store and doing all the other things essential to qualifying as a Presidential candidate from the Middle West. Had he stayed close to the soil he would in time have become Noble Grand of the Odd Fellows' Lodge and vice-president of a hardware house travelling four men on the road. And when the Weekly Star-Monitor gave a trip to Niagara to the most popular school-teacher in the county he would have been one of the three prominent citizens chosen to count the ballots.

But in an evil hour he moved to New York and pretty soon he was included among our large and growing army of the Total Losses. The foolish bug bored in behind the right ear and drew off the brains. Eventually we find him wearing a pair of half-masted pants with a misplaced leather bib sewed into them, riding in the Park, English fashion.

The English fashion of riding was invented by a restless person who hated to stay long in one place. You hit the saddle at rare intervals only and spend the rest of the time framing bits of landscape between your calliper legs. In the last stages the subject of these remarks rides without his hat. The case may then be considered as hopeless. In warm weather there would be danger of his intellect frying, with the sunny side up, only by that time there isn't any intellect. Nothing remains under the hair except the recent site.

THE FUNNY PART:

Yet some people believe life in a great city is beneficial to man.

The Helmet of Navarre by Bertha Runkle

Author of "THE TRUTH ABOUT TOLNA."

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Felix Broux is page to Count Etienne de Mar, estranged son of the Duke of St. Quentin, a powerful French noble. The period is 1593, when Henry of Navarre, claimant of the French throne, is besieging Paris. The city is held by the League, under the Duke of Mayenne. St. Quentin is a follower of Henry, but has boldly come to Paris. Mayenne's nephew, Paul de Lorraine, tries to make Mar assassinate St. Quentin. Mar and Paul both love Lorance de Montlue, Mayenne's ward. Etienne rescues St. Quentin from a gang of Mayenne's men, and father and son are reconciled. Mar secures an interview with Lorance in which she confesses she loves him. He is arrested by Paul's instigation and sent to the Bastile. Mayenne tells Lorance Mar shall be tortured and killed. She flees in disguise to St. Quentin's palace. Finding that St. Quentin is at St. Denis with the King she goes thither, accompanied by servants of the Duke. She is courteously received by St. Quentin, who next day goes to Mayenne, tells him his ward is at St. Denis and demands Mar's release. Mayenne at first threatens and blusters, but soon grows calmer.

He gives St. Quentin an order for Mar's release. Paul de Lorraine (whom St. Quentin knows as Lucas) tries in vain to deter Mayenne from this leniency. Felix carries the release order to the Governor of the Bastile, where he finds Paul seeking an interview with Mar, with a last desperate idea of assassinating the latter in his cell before the order for release can be delivered.

Felix's arrival foils his purpose and Mar is released. Mar and Felix go to one of the city gates, where it has been arranged that Vigo shall meet them with horses and conduct them to the King at St. Denis. While they are awaiting Vigo Paul appears and challenges Mar to a duel. Mar accepts, and they go to a deserted house in the neighborhood, where they may fight without interruption.

Felix discovers that Paul has let them into a trap, and that the house is full of assassins in de Lorraine's pay. Mar and Paul fight in a locked room. The assassins try to batter down the door. Felix attracts the attention of a man whose inn is just across the narrow street. A ladder is thrust across from an upper window of the inn. Mar kills Lucas and dashes to safety across the ladder just as the assassins burst into the room. Felix follows, but as he is midway across the ladder breaks.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"The Very Pattern of a King."

THE next world appeared to be strangely like this. I found myself lying on a straw bed in a little low attic, my head resting comfortably on some one's shoulder, while some one else poured wine down my gullet. Presently I discovered that Maitre Jacques's was the ministering hand, M. Etienne's the shoulder. After all this was not heaven, but still Paris.

I had no desire to speak so long as the flow of old Jacques's best Burgundy continued; but when he saw my eyes wide open he stopped, and I said, my voice, to my surprise, very faint and quavery:

"What happened?"

"Dear, brave lad! You fainted!"

My lord's voice was as unsteady as mine.

"But the ladder?" I murmured.

"The ladder broke. But you had hold beyond the break. You hung on till we seized you. And then you swooned."

"What a baby!" I said, getting to my feet. "But the men, monsieur? Peyrot?"

"I think we've seen the last of those worthies. They took to their heels when you escaped them."

"But, monsieur, they've gone to inform! You'll be taken for killing Lucas."

"I doubt it. Themselves smell too strong of blood to dare bruit the matter. Natheless, if you can walk now we'll make good time to the gate."

But for all his haste he would not start till I had had some bread and soup down in the kitchen.

"We must take good care of you, [illegible]" he said. "For where the St. Quentins would be without you I tremble to think."

I set out a new man. In three steps, it seemed to me, we had reached the city gate, to find the way blocked by a company of twenty or thirty horse, the St. Quentin uniform flaunting gay in the sun. The nearest trooper set up a shout at sight of us, when Vigo, coming out suddenly from behind a nag, took M. le Comte in his big embrace. He released him immediately, looking immensely startled at his own demonstration.

M. Etienne laughed out at him.

"Be more careful, I beg you, Vigo! You will make me imagine myself of some importance."

"I thought you swallowed up," Vigo growled. "You had been here—I couldn't get a trace of you."

"I was killing Lucas."

"Sacre! He's dead?"

"Dead."

"That's the best morning's work ever you did, M. Etienne."

"Have you horse for us, Vigo?"

"Of course. Some of the men will walk. I suppose we're leaving Paris to buy you out of the Bastille?"

"Not worth it, eh, Vigo?"

"Yes," said Vigo gravely; "yes, M. Etienne. You are worth it."

Vigo's troop was but slow-moving, as some of the horses carried double, some were loaded with chattels. M. Etienne and I, on the duke's blood chargers, soon left the cavalcade behind us. Before I knew it we were halted at the outpost of the camp. My lord gave his name.

"To be sure!" cried the sentry. "We've orders about you. You dine with the king, M. de Mar."

"Mordieu! I do?"

"You do. Orders are to take you to him out of hand. Captain!"

The officer lounged out of the tavern door.

"Captain, M. de Mar."

"Oh, aye!" cried the captain, coming forward with brisk interest. "M. de Mar, you're the child of luck. You dine with the king."

"I am the child of bewilderment, captain."

"And you've not too much time to recover from it, M. le Comte. You are to go straight to the king."

"I may go to M. de St. Quentin's lodgings first?"

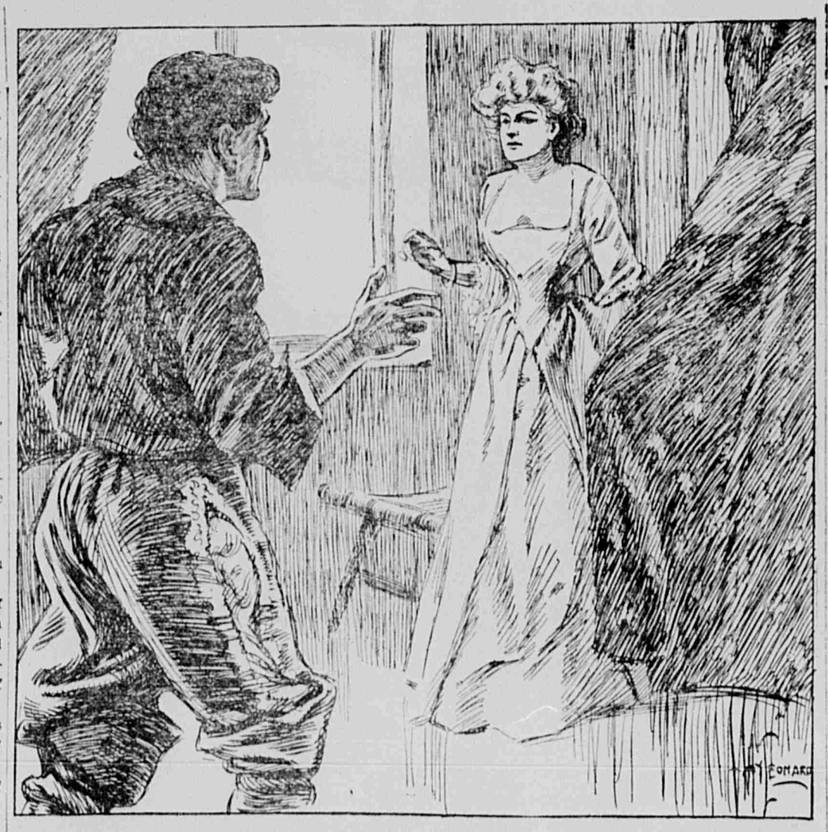
"No, monsieur; straight to the king."

"What! in my shirt?"

"I can't help it, monsieur," the captain laughed. "I suppose the king did not guess you were coming in your shirt. Anyway, his order was to fetch you direct. And direct you go. But never care. Our king's no stickler for toggery. He's known what it is himself to lack for a coat."

"I might wash my face, then."

"Certainly. No harm in that."



Had the sun gone down the room would have been brilliant from the light of her face.

So M. Etienne went into the tournebride and washed his face. And that was all the toilet he made for audience with the greatest king in the world.

"You'll ride to monsieur's," he commanded me, when the captain answered:

"No; he goes with you, monsieur, if he's the boy Choux, Troux, whatever it is."

"Broux—Felix Broux!" I cried, a-quiver.

"That's it. You go to the king too. Another luck child."

I thought so indeed. We followed the sentry through the town in a waking dream, content to let him do with us as he would. He did the talking, explained to the grandees in the king's hall our names and errand. One of them led us up the stairs and knocked at a closed door.

"Enter!"

It was Henry's own voice. I pinched monsieur's hand to tell him. Our guide opened the door a crack.

"M. de Mar, sire, and his servant."

"Good, La Force. Let them enter."

M. La Force fairly pushed us over the sill, so abashed were we, and shut the door upon us.

The king was alone. But before this simple gentleman in the rusty black M. Etienne caught his breath as he had not done before a court in full pomp. He had seen courts, but he had never seen the first soldier of Europe. He advanced three steps into the room and forgot to kneel, forgot to lower his gaze in the presence, but merely stared wide-eyed at majesty as majesty stared at him. Thus they stood surveying each other from top to toe in the frankest curiosity, till at length the king spoke:

"M. de Mar, you look less like a carpet knight than I expected."

M. Etienne came to himself, to kneel at once.

"Sire, I blush for my looks. But your zealous soldiers would not let me from their clutches. I am just come from killing Paul de Lorraine."

"What! the spy Lucas?"

"Himself. And when I left the spot by way of the window in some haste I was not expecting this honor, sire."

"Nor do I think you deserve it, ventre-saint-gris!" the king cried. "Though you come hatless and coatless to-day you have been a long time on the road, M. de Mar."

"Aye, sire."

"You might as well have stayed away as come at this hour. Marry, all's over! Go hang yourself, my breathless follower! We have fought all our great battles and you were not there!"

Scarlet under the lash, M. Etienne, kneeling, bent his eyes on the ground. He was silent, but as the king spoke not he felt it incumbent to stammer something:

"That is my life's misfortune, sire."

"Misfortune, sirrah? Misfortune you call it? Let me hear you say fault."

"I dare not, sire." M. Etienne murmured. "It was of course Your Majesty's fault. We cannot serve heretics, we St. Quentins."

Ventre-saint-gris! You think well of yourself, young Mar."

"I must, sire, when Your Majesty invites me to dinner."

The king burst into laughter, and his temper, which I believe was all a play, vanished to the winds.

"Pardieu! you're a glib fellow, Mar. But I didn't invite you to dinner for your own sake, little as you can imagine it. So you would have joined my flag four years ago had I not been a stinking heretic?"

"Aye, sire, I needs must have. Therefore am I everlastingly beholden to Your Majesty for remaining so long a Huguenot."

"How now, cockerel?"

M. Etienne faltered a moment. He was not burdened by shyness, but before the king's sharp glance he underwent a cold terror lest he had been too free with his tongue. However, there was naught to do but go on.

"Sire, had I fought under your banner like a man at Dieppe and Arques and Ivry, M. de Mayenne had never dreamed of marrying his ward to me. I had never known her."

"The loveliest demoiselle I ever saw!" the king cried. "I shall marry her to one of my stanchest supporters."

The smile was washed from M. Etienne's lips. He turned as white as linen. In one moment his youth seemed to go from him. The king, unnoting, picked a parchment off the table.

"To one of my bravest captains. Here's his commission, my lad."

M. Etienne stared up from the writing into the king's laughing face.

"I, sire? I?"

"You, Mar, you. You are my stanch supporter, perhaps?"

"Your horse-boy, an you ask it, sire!"

He pressed his lips to the king's hand, great, helpless tears dripping down upon it.

"If I ever desert you I am a dog, sire! But the fighting is not all done. I will capture you a flag yet."

"Perhaps. I much fear me there's life in Mayenne still."

M. Etienne, not venturing to rise, yet lifted beseeching eyes to the king's.

"What! you want to get away from me, ventre-saint-gris?"

My lord, who wanted precisely that, had no choice but to protest that nothing was further from his thoughts.

"Stuff!" the king exclaimed. "You're in a sweat to be gone, you unmannerly churl! You, a raw, untried boy, are invited to dine with the king, and your one itch is to escape the tedium!"

"Sire"——

"Peace! You are guilty, sirrah. Take your punishment!"

He darted across the room, and throwing open an inner door called gently, "Mademoiselle!"

"Yes, sire," she answered, coming to the threshold.

The peasant lass was gone forever. The great lady, regal in satins, stood before us. She bent on the king a little, eager, questioning glance; then she caught sight of her lover. Faith, had the sun gone out the room would have been brilliant with the light of her face.

M. Etienne sprang up and toward her. And she, pushing by the king as if he had been the doorpost, went to him. They stood before each other, neither touching nor speaking, but only looking one at the other like two blind folk by a heavenly miracle restored to sight.

"How now, children? Am I not a model monarch? Do you swear by me forever? Do you vouch me the very pattern of a king?"

Answer he got none. They heard nothing, knew nothing, but each other. The slighted king chuckled and, beckoning me, withdrew to his cabinet.

So here an end. For if Henry of France leave them you and I may not stay.

THE END.

The second instalment of "The Masquerader" (begun in to-day's special fiction supplement) will appear on this page of Monday's Evening World.